

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph:

**[0038]** Because stop rib 3 either prevents or reduces the swelling deformation of shutter disk 1 under overpressure conditions, stop rib 3 forces shutter disk 1 to lift its peripheral portions as if shutter disk 1 were hinged along stop rib 3, thereby causing the membrane valve to open in a book-like fashion, ~~by~~. Further, the book-like opening of shutter disk 1 causes the portions of sealing lip 101 that are most distant from stop rib 3 to lift at greater height than in the prior art, thereby increasing the available passageway and the outflow of liquid or gas.

Please replace paragraph [0040] with the following amended paragraph:

**[0040]** Stop rib 3 may be positioned across different diameters of shutter disk 1, for instance, across the shortest diameter. Further, in different variations of the present embodiment, stop rib 3 may also be in a position that is either coincident with or offset from primary clamping pin 201, may be positioned in a non-diametrical position, and may have a diverging profile, wherein part of stop rib 3 may be in contact with shutter disk ~~one~~ 1 along a single line and part of stop rib 3 may be in contact with shutter disk 1 along two lines.

Please add the following new paragraph after paragraph [0054]:

**[0054.1]** With specific reference to Figs. 7-8, it can be seen that shutter disk 1 in an open condition enables fluid flow through the valve seat, and also that shutter disk 1 in a closed condition prevents such fluid flow. The valve seat is situated within a flattening of the wall of valve case 10, that is, within a planar portion of valve case 10. In one embodiment, such planar portion is inclined (that is, it is disposed at an angle different from 90 degrees) in relation to the longitudinal axis of mouthpiece 210 of the second stage.

Please replace paragraph [0057] with the following amended paragraph:

[0057] Central portion 211 has a U-shaped profile, with stop rib 3 extending from the concave face of the "U" and with peripheral edge 103 of stop rib 3 coming substantially in contact with shutter disk 1. Peripheral portions 111 are each connected to central portion 211 at one end and are open to the external environment at the opposite end, so that the coupling of central portion 211 with peripheral portions 111 forms outflow duct 11 having open head sections at the terminal ends. As shown in Fig. 8, the longitudinal axis of outflow duct 11 is essentially perpendicular to mouthpiece 210, but the open head sections may be oriented at an angle different than 90 degrees in relation to mouthpiece 210, typically larger than 90 degrees, in order to orient the air ejected from the diver away from the diver's field of view.